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ABSTRACT

Kamehameha Schools' Prekindergarten Educational Program (PREP) was started in 1978 to prepare at-risk Hawaiian families and their children for success in school. PREP's direct services include: (1) parent-infant educational services, including home visits to help parents prepare for a new baby and later learn appropriate child development activities; (2) a traveling preschool, which involves a teacher and aide conducting a 2-hour preschool session at a park or other community site; and (3) a center-based preschool held by a teacher and aide 5 days a week for full school hours. In addition, PREP has two support groups, including the Project Team, which develops curriculum, conducts training, provides consultation to staff, reviews assessments, and makes modifications; and the Evaluation and Data Management Department, which assesses attendance patterns, demographics, and participant outcomes. PREP emphasizes language and literacy, family involvement, and Hawaiian culture. Language skills are developed through book-lending programs and through listening and writing centers. The program offers various ways for extended families to participate and play leadership roles in programs. Traditional Hawaiian language, songs, dances, and crafts are included in the program, and staff members try to model and teach traditional Hawaiian values to children. PREP uses a variety of standardized and specifically developed assessment tools to measure program success. (AC)

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
THE ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (ACEI)
April 1, 1994
New Orleans, Louisiana

HELPING FAMILIES SUCCEED IN TWO WORLDS

Presenter: Vivian Murray

Aloha! This evening I would like to transport all of you to Hawaii. Now I know that when most people think of Hawaii, they think of (x) beautiful beaches, (x) coconut palms, and (x) hula dancers. And, while these are certainly part of Hawaii, I would like to show you another side. You might think of this part of Hawaii as where the hula dancers go home to. It is a place that doesn't look very promising for Hawaiians.

For example, (x) among 12th graders, drug use is significantly higher for Hawaiians than for the general population. (x) Hawaiians account for approximately 160 juvenile arrests per 1000 as compared to approximately 130 for the non-Hawaiian population. (x) The percentage of Hawaiian students with excessive absences from school is about twice as high as any other ethnic group. (x) Hawaiians aren't in school so it should be no surprise that they account for about a third of the students retained in grade although they make up only a fifth of the general population.

The statistics related to childbearing show the same kinds of trends. (x) Approximately 50% of Hawaiian women giving birth are single compared to 25% for the general population. (x) 34% of Hawaiian women start prenatal care late as compared to 25% for the general population. (x) And there are almost 9 infant deaths per 1000 births as compared to 6.5 for the general population.

Please meet a wonderful woman. (x) Ke Ali'i, our chiefess, Bernice Pauahi Bishop lived in the first half of the 1800's. Pauahi was the last direct line descendant of Kamehameha the Great who was the chief who united all of the Hawaiian Islands under his rule. During Pauahi's life time, it was already quite evident that the Hawaiian people were not handling Westernization well. As the last Kamehameha, Pauahi inherited large personal holdings of land that other members of the Kamehameha family had owned. She ended up personally owning approximately 10% of all the land that make up the Hawaiian Islands.

Because she was concerned about her people and she had no children of her own, she decided to use her estate to benefit Hawaiians. She drew up a will that directed that her estate be used to establish and support a school for Hawaiian children and (x) in 1887, The Kamehameha Schools was opened. The seal of the

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Schools features Kamehameha the Great in the center.

The original program served children from kindergarten through the 12th grade. However, as the need became apparent, Kamehameha Schools entered less traditional areas such as adult education, drug prevention, alternative education, and early childhood education.

Kamehameha Schools' PreKindergarten Educational Program (PREP) was started in 1978. (x) The purpose of the program is to prepare at-risk Hawaiian families and their children for success in school. Families do not need to meet at risk criteria to participate in the program but we place our services in areas that have a lot of Hawaiian families, a lot of low income families, and schools have low standardized test scores. PREP gradually expanded over the years and (x) today is a state-wide program serving thousands of families from the prenatal period until the child goes to kindergarten.

(x) PREP consists of direct services, on-site supervision, a program development and resource team, and data management and evaluation.

(x) The direct services consists of three components: Parent-Infant Educational Services, Traveling Preschool, and Center-Based Preschool.

(x) In the Parent-Infant Educational Services, a Parent Educator visits with a family once a week at their home for approximately an hour.

Before baby's birth, the Parent Educator helps the family prepare for baby's arrival. They discuss topics like fetal development, labor and delivery, and diet, nutrition, and exercise. This last is an important topic because this is where we discuss smoking, alcohol, and drugs. We also discuss infant care, hospital procedures, breast and bottle feeding, how babies learn, and family planning. (x) As part of the prenatal curriculum, expectant families sew a quilt. We try to have every family make this quilt as a part of preparing for baby's arrival. They end up with a useful article for baby and, while working on it, (x) they learn about ho'onana-looking, ho'olohe-listening, ho'onene-moving, and ho'opa-touching as the ways that babies learn. (example) The pictures on the quilt show parents and grandparents interacting with babies.

The plants shown are plants that are important to that area. For example, the Honolulu quilt features ulu or breadfruit on one panel. The name for the Honolulu site is Ulupono, which means to grow with excellence. The name makes the ulu special to our site. The Honolulu quilt also features the lama tree. The

traditional name for our service area is Palama which means fence of lama wood. This refers to a special compound which existed in ancient Hawaii which housed young chiefs and chiefesses as they approached adolescence. In these compounds, they were strictly supervised to insure the lineage of their firstborn children. Lineage determined rank in ancient Hawaii.

There is also a quilt resource booklet (example) which we give to families. This booklet has information about the plants shown on the quilt like I just shared with you. It also has information about traditional used of the plants shown and some child development information explaining how babies learn through ho'onana, ho'opa, ho'olohe, and ho'onene.

(x) After baby's birth, the Parent Educator discusses and demonstrates appropriate child development activities for baby during visits with the family through (x) play activities and (x) t-shirts that show babies demonstrating age appropriate language skills from 4 to 24 months of age. (examples) Caregivers are taught how to plan appropriate activities for their babies, observe their baby's behavior, evaluate it, and develop further plans through use of the Home Observation Participation and Evaluation form (HOPE). We believe that parents are the child's first and most important teachers so we give them teacher tools to fulfill that role.

In the Parent Infant Educational Services, the caregivers are the target audience although the child is involved in planned visit activities. The Parent-Infant Educational Services is for families from the time the pregnancy is confirmed until the child is two years old. The baby needs to be Hawaiian.

(x) The Traveling Preschool team consists of a Teacher, an Aide, (x) and a van. Two days a week, they go to a community site like a park or a church hall and have a two hour preschool day. There is (x) center time for an hour and a half during which children and their caregivers use (x) activities set out on mats and tables. (x) Then everyone helps pack the activities up (x) and the teacher leads a circle time. They all sing songs together, the teacher reads a story, gives a lesson to the children, serves them snack, and while they are eating, (x) gives a lesson to the caregivers. (x) Then everything is packed up again and Traveling Preschool is over for another day.

An adult must attend Traveling Preschool with the child. Both adults and children are the target audience. Most sites are open to all families. A few sites are restricted to Hawaiian families only. The Traveling Preschool is designed for families with two and three year olds but children zero to five may attend because we do not want families unable to attend because they have other children at home for whom they have no child care.

(x) In the Center-Based Preschool, a Teacher and an Aide hold preschool (x) in a conventional classroom at a center five days a week for full school hours. They have (x) circle, (x) centers (x), (x) outdoor play, (x) cooking, (x) morning snack and lunch, (x) music, (x) story time, and nap. We try to offer them (x) many opportunities to make choices.

The children are the target audience of the Center Based Preschool although adults are strongly encouraged to participate in a variety of ways. The Center-Based Preschool is for families with four year olds. Children need to be Hawaiian except in the classrooms that are a partnership with our public school system.

This program component is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

In addition to the direct services, PREP has two support groups to help us work towards our goal:

(x) The Project Team is a support group that develops curriculum, conducts training, provides consultation to staff at sites, reviews assessments and makes modifications as suggested by the data, and keeps current on developments in the field.

The Evaluation and Data Management Department is another support group that handles approximately (x) 23,000 records a year to help us assess how effective a job we are doing. They help us with attendance patterns, demographics, and how participants are doing according to standardized and locally developed measures.

(x) PREP emphasizes language and literacy, family involvement, and Hawaiian culture:

(x) Traditional Hawaiian language, songs, dances, crafts, and artifacts are included in our program. We help parents teach their babies the names of their body parts in Hawaiian. (x) Children learn some hula in our preschools. (x) We try to get volunteer family members to come in to share talents like lauhala weaving.

A lot of effort goes into making the environment culture-friendly. (x) Pictures show Hawaiian looking people. Books about local people, places, and things are used. (x) Familiar objects like a muumuu and slippers are included in the dramatic play center. Children paint with hala brushes as well as conventional paint brushes.

(x) At a deeper level, we try to model and teach traditional Hawaiian values to the children. For example, it is important to care for others (malama) and to respect, value, and honor the

kupuna, the elders. Staff members will treat kupuna with respect, address them as grandma or tutu, and will not allow children to be disrespectful to them. They might suggest to a child to give tutu a lei and a honi, or kiss.

We also try to implement a program that is compatible with the home culture of the families. This means designing a program and using practices that allow children and adults to learn in familiar settings and contexts of interactions. For example, most Hawaiian children are taught to address all adults "Aunty" and "Uncle." (x) Our teachers are usually called Aunty Pam, Aunty Melodie, Aunty Luana, etc. Because I am the equivalent of the principal, most of the teachers and parents refer to me as Mrs. Murray. But some of the children are so used to addressing all adult women as Aunty, they translate that into Aunty Murray and I love it!

(x) In traditional Hawaiian culture, family, the 'ohana, is the basic unit of social grouping. Hawaiians define family differently than in Western culture. (x) It is an inclusive rather than an exclusive group. For Hawaiians, family means a large, extended group, not necessarily related by blood but connected by relationship ties. We have what we call "calabash" relatives in Hawaii. That means "while we may not be related by blood or marriage, I will treat you like family."

This means when we have family activities, we are not extending the invitation to just mom and dad. We also mean (x) brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunties and uncles, cousins, and close family friends. When we have a preschool activity that we want an adult to attend with the child, we have had mom's sister's boyfriend participate and that's fine with us. When we have a beach day for Parent-Infant Educational Services families, we invite participating families to bring extended family members. We feel that if a person is close to the family they are probably around enough to have an effect on the child.

We try to offer a variety of ways for families to participate in our programs. (x) We invite families to work in the classroom and accompany classes on excursions. But we try to provide other more creative opportunities too.

We hold some activities in the evenings and on Saturdays.

We do activities like Keiki Scrapbook that goes back and forth between home and school. (example) The Keiki Scrapbook is basically an empty book that gets filled up during the school year. Some pages are filled in at school and some are filled in at home. They are shared and enjoyed in both places. (examples of pages done at school and at home)

(x) We offer families training in children's computer software so they can assist preschoolers in our computer centers.

(x) At Traveling Preschool, every activity has a note on it directed at adults. The note might suggest some different ways to use that activity, some English or Hawaiian language to use during the activity, and some relevant Hawaiian cultural information. (example)

We try to offer parents leadership roles in our program. (x) There are Parent Advisory Committees for each component of the program to solicit feedback and suggestions. There are also occasional parent-led Ad Hoc Committees to plan specific events like the end of the year celebration for the Center-Based Preschool.

(x) We believe that parents are the child's first and most important teachers and that they are crucial to long term success of our program goals. Our goal is to convince them to continue these kinds of interactions and activities with their child long after they have left our program.

(x) To attain our goal of helping to prepare at-risk Hawaiian families and their children for success in school, we have focused our energy on helping children develop their language skills.

(x) We encourage reading to and by the children. (x) By the time a baby is four months old, we are bringing in books to read to the child. Typically, parents' initial response is that their child is much too young for books. However, we bring in toddler books and show them appropriate ways to use books with their babies. By the time their baby is two years old, parents are buying good books themselves for their child.

(x) We have a book lending program called Keiki Book Bags in the Traveling Preschool and the Center-Based Preschool to encourage and support families' reading to their children at home. Children may borrow a book for a week at a time. We give them a special bag to keep their book in and suggest they hang the bag in a special place to remind them to read it. The bags have a special logo on them and a place to write the child's name.

(example) In the Traveling Preschool, because attendance is more sporadic, the bags are paper and we try to use paperback books to minimize the loss if books are not returned.

(example) In the Center Based Preschool, the bags are made of cloth and many of the books are hardback. When we start the project, we send home (example) a printed cartoon with a

description of how the project will work. There is also (example) a record keeping sheet in each bag. We ask parents to list the book borrowed each week and to keep track of how many times each is read to the child. We do this to find out which books are most and least popular with the children. It is also a motivator to the families to read the book at least a couple of times. When we started this project, we got a lot of comments from families that they were tired of reading the same story over and over to their child. So we developed a workshop on the value of repeated readings and some follow up activities to do with their child. One of the activities we suggest is for parents to have their child retell the story to them. We give them (example) a story retell sheet to write it down on and send to school to share with the rest of the class.

(x) All of our classrooms have listening centers so children can have books read to themselves even when all the adults are busy. (x) And, of course, there are always lots of books around for children.

(x) We use the environment as a rich source of words and ideas. We don't want families to think they have to spend a lot of money for their child to be successful in school. When we take families to the fire station, we suggest language and activities to use there and at home as a follow up.

(x) To help children see themselves as capable authors, we also encourage a lot of story dictation at home (x) and at school. All of our Center-Based Preschool teachers have the class help compose (x) a Morning Message at circle that the teacher writes on the board for the class to read together.

(x) We also have writing centers so children can practice their emergent writing skills (x) in a variety of media and contexts.

How do we know if we make a difference? We use a variety of measures to see how effective we are with children in our program. Some are standardized assessment tools and some are tools we have developed ourselves.

(x) In the Parent Educational Services, we use the Hawaii Developmental Charts (formerly known as the HELP charts) to track babies' developmental progress. Data shows that children in the Parent Educational Services are overwhelmingly at or above their age appropriate developmental level in all areas.

(x) In the Traveling Preschool, we used the Revised Denver Prescreening Developmental Questionnaire (RPDQ) last year at a few sites. Interviews with participating parents indicated that they learned some developmentally appropriate expectations for

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their child and used this information with their child. Teachers also said they used information from the RPDQ to help parents work with their child at Traveling Preschool.

This year we have just started using the Infant-Child Monitoring Questionnaire (ICMQ) and have also developed a portfolio assessment kit called Ho'okupu. (example) The Ho'okupu folder has the lauhala imprinted all over it. The lauhala symbolized the family working together in shared child raising. There is also a picture of the taro on the front. The taro is a symbol of family. There are two pockets to hold samples of the child's work. Because the children in the Traveling Preschool are young, there are sheets for the parent to write things to share with their child: The Story About My Name, The Story About My Family, The Story About My Birth, and The Story About My Birthday. It is too early to have results from either of these tools.

(x) In the Center-Based Preschool, we administer the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) in the Fall and Spring and the Developmental Screening Checklist (DSC) in the Spring only. On the PPVT last year, the children went from the 10th to the 25th percentile in one school year. So they generally make a significant gain but they are still far below the national average.

In addition, we have developed a Curriculum Outcome Assessment to help us individualize our program for children. We have piloted this tool in a few classrooms but it is too early to have results from it.

(x) In addition, we are trying to follow PREP participants as they enter kindergarten. Results look promising. Our data shows that PREP participants are scoring at the 25th percentile at kindergarten entry. In the areas where we have our program, Hawaiian children who had not participated in our program were scoring at the 6th percentile and the general population was scoring at the 5th percentile at kindergarten entry.

(x) We are encouraged by this data. We think we are helping Hawaiian families cope with the modern Western world that has become Hawaii while holding onto their traditional Hawaiian culture. We will continue to work towards our goal to help Hawaiian families succeed in two worlds. (x) When the children succeed, we all feel like winners. Aloha.